

A
SERMON

Preached before

The Artillery Company

OF

LONDON

AT

St. Mary Le Bow,

April. 20. 1682.

In the reign of James II

BY

THOMAS SPRAT, D.D.

One of His Majesties Chaplains in Ordinary.

The Second Edition.

Published at their request.

LONDON,

Printed for John Baker, at the three Pigeons in
St. Paul's Church-yard. 1682.

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To the Honourable

Sir *William Prichard* Knight and Alderman,
President of the *Artillery Company*.

Sir *James Smith* Knight and Alderman,
Vice-President.

To the Right Worshipful,

Sir *Matthew Andrews* Treasurer.

As also to the Right Honourable,

Earl of <i>Thanet</i> ,	Lord <i>Allington</i> ,
Lord <i>Lumley</i> ,	Lord <i>Paston</i> ,

To the Right Worshipful, and Worshipful,

Sir <i>John Narborough</i> ,	<i>John Shales</i> Esq;
<i>Philip Frowd</i> Esq;	Maj. <i>Richard Burdon</i> .

S T E W A R D S.

And to the whole Court of Assistants, Field-Officers,
Captains, and Gentlemen, Professing and Exercising Arms
in that Renowned and Honourable Society.

Right Honourable, &c.

INobedience to your commands, I have published this honest,
and loyal Discourse: which is all I can say to its advan-
tage: except, what was an unexpected commendation to
it, that the Enemies of our Church and State have thought
fit to dislike it; and to shew they did so, have had recourse to

The Epistle Dedicatory.

their old Arts of lying, and slandering. But it is no matter what they say, or do; whilst you continue like your selves, to think the practice of Loyalty not only a part of your Profession, as Souldiers, but of your Religion as Christians.

As to the main Doctrine here delivered, there is not any one true Son of the Church of England, but will consent to it: nor any of its Adversaries, that can oppose it without renouncing the common Principles of Christian Government. As for the manner of handling it, I have reason to ask your pardon, but not theirs. That I have not managed it as so noble an Argument deserves, I beg your excuse. That I have not treated of it with bitterness, or virulency; I believe, even they will confess, when they shall read it; and let them consider, what moderation, and temper a man had need be of, that in this Nation, and this Age, shall speak against Faction, and Rebellion, without extraordinary Severity.

Right Honourable, &c.

I am

Your most humble, and most

obedient Servant

April 29.
1682.

Thomas Sprat.

A SERMON

Preached before

The Artillery Company.

St. LUKE xxii. part of ver. 36.

— *He that hath no Sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.*



When in such Warlike Solemnities, as yours of this day, men of my Profession are admitted to the honour of bearing any part, I suppose it is not expected, that we should cloy, and vex your ears with the terms of your own Art; or affect impertinently to entertain you with discourses on the Heroic Science of Arms. *The weapons of our* ^{2 Cor. 10. 4.} *warfare are not carnal, but spiritual.* And if it was justly esteemed once a very indecent presumption in a Philosopher, to read a Lecture of Battels before one great Commander; how much

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more improper would it be for a Divine to undertake to teach the Art of War in the presence of so many.

But when you call us hither to serve you in these your annual Triumphs, I know you do it with a pious design, That as all Wars of old were usually begun with a public Sacrifice, so these your Exercises of War should first be consecrated by Devotion; That here in the House of God you should first receive the Churches Prayers and Benedictions on those Weapons, which abroad you are so ready to employ in the Churches defence; That of those Arms, of which you have elsewhere learnt the skilful, and the glorious practice, here you might consider the saving, and the religious use: How a meer natural Courage may be so improved by Piety, as to become a most Christian Grace: How Victory may be not only made lawful, and barely innocent; but how it may be sanctified: and sanctified, not first by Rebellion, then by Sacrilege; but by fighting only in a truly good and righteous Cause; and by defending it, not with hypocritical zeal, and zealous cruelty; not only with Valour and Conduct; but with Fidelity, Loyalty, Justice, Equity, and Charity. How this may be done, it being, I humbly conceive, my proper business here to deliberate; whilst I endeavour to do it,

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I must intreat the favour, not only of your common patience, but of your more than ordinary pardon: if, besides my many other infirmities, that, which ought to have been an advantage, shall prove my disadvantage: if even this great appearance, so beautifully-terrible, as an Army with Banners, which guards this place, and secures all within it, and round about it, particularly us of the Clergy, shall yet happen somewhat to discompose me, so that I shall not be able to bring a firmness of mind equal to the greatness of the occasion.

However for my encouragement I have brought with me our blessed Lord, the Great Captain of our Salvation, speaking to you with power: and, in the words of my Text, pronouncing that, which at first hearing, seems a most surprizing Doctrine for the Prince of peace to deliver: That sometimes the Habiliments of War are more necessary, more becoming a Christian, than the very Robes of Peace: That in some seasons of imminent danger, those of his Disciples, who had not Swords, were obliged to sell, if need were, their very garments to buy them.

Such is the literal sense of the words. But was not this a strange Precept for that King to injoin, whose Kingdom was not of this world? How could Joh. 18. 36. this be consistent with that meekness in Persecutions, that long-suffering of Injuries, that very

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Acts 8.32.

Mat. 26.53.

Luke 2.14.

Mat. 26.52.

love of Enemies, with which his whole Gospel abounds? How was this conformable to his mild example, *who went as a Sheep to the slaughter, and as a Lamb that is dumb*? Who though he might have summoned *more than twelve Legions of Angels* to his immediate rescue, yet never employed them as a Triumphant Host, but as an Harmonious Choir, to sing *Peace on Earth, good will towards men*. How comes he just then, as he was going to be betrayed by one of his own Disciples, into the hands of his most cruel Enemies, against whom he designed nothing less than opposition; how comes he then to talk of furnishing his Attendants with Instrumens of War, and of preferring Swords before Garments? Then especially, when presently after, as soon as he was seized on by the High Priests Officers, he severely rebuked the great Apostle St. Peter for but once using the Sword: *Put up thy Sword, says he, into its place. He that taketh the Sword shall perish by the Sword.*

It is true, these two remarkable Sentences of our blessed Saviour, that to St. Peter, and this in my Text, may seem at first view capable of contrary interpretations. But if we shall examine the circumstances, and occasions of their delivery, we shall soon find that they do not only very well agree with each other; but both together may teach us the whole Christian Doctrine of War: what

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what use of secular Arms the Gospel permits, what it condemns.

First, *S. Peters* case was this; he with an unseasonable passion, proceeding from his own intemperate zeal, without any call from his Superiours, had wounded the High Priests Servant, whilst he was performing, 'tis true, a most unjust action, but was commissioned to do it by public authority. Him therefore his Master censures for striking with the Sword without a sufficient warrant. That he blames as an illegal attempt of a private man against a public Officer.

Put up thy Sword, says he, *O Peter*. Submit with patience. Oppose not Authority. Do not thou break the Laws of thy Country though for kindness and love of me. *Put up thy Sword*. He that uses the Sword unlawfully, though on a pretence never so pious, *shall perish by the Sword*: shall either be destroyed by it here, or punished hereafter by God himself for having so used it.

Wherefore we are not to conclude that our blessed Lord, by this check given to *St. Peter*, did absolutely prohibit all manner of using the Sword among Christians; but only that he taught us the great duty of Christian submission. For if *St. Peter* was, then certainly all other Christian Subjects are, forbidden to unsheath the Sword against their lawful Sovereign, or his Ministers, as they are commissioned by him, though they do it on a pretext.

pretext so spiritual, as the cause of Christ himself. And of all that call themselves Christians, methinks the pretended Successors of *St. Peter* might hence have been warned, not to grasp at an universal power of the Sword, or to usurp a Temporal Sovereignty over the world; on any shadow of right derived from *St. Peter*: since he was so far from having any such power, so unsuitable to his Apostleship, that of all the Apostles, *St. Peter* only was left to himself, to give an opportunity, by his public reproof, for confirming the quite contrary Doctrine.

Now in my Text, our blessed Lord prepares his Disciples, with extraordinary courage to overcome those dangers they had hitherto been freed from: but after he should leave them, they were presently to encounter. In the verse foregoing he appeals to them, whether they had wanted any thing in his service, though formerly he had sent them forth without Purles, or Srips, or Shoes; without having taken any common care before-hand for their subsistence: and they acknowledging they had lacked nothing, He proceeds here to advise them, that for the future, whoever had Purfes, or Srips, they should not neglect them; whoever had not Swords, they should provide them.

Erasmus in a just indignation, that the Grammatical sense of these words should be so wrested by

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by some Interpreters as to justify the groundless Quarrels, and cruel Wars between the Christian Princes of his time, will allow my Text to have only a mystical meaning, and interprets it thus: He that has no Sword of the Gospel, or of the Word of God, let him by all means procure it.

But the general voice of the best Interpreters agree, that our Lord, by putting his Followers in mind of furnishing themselves with Purfes, Scrips, and Swords, does, as by so many Symbols, and Signs, represent to them, that now shortly far worse times of perils, and persecutions attended them; and therefore they ought to be more cautious, and watchful, more careful to be supplied with all inward, and outward just assistances; as all men are wont to make a greater provision of Purfes, Scrips, and Swords, when they perceive some great and imminent dangers approaching.

Calvin, Grotius, Dr. Hammond, &c.

My Text therefore being apparently a figurative expression, whereby our Lord commands all his Followers to arm their minds against the Spiritual Conflicts, and Temporal Afflictions they were to meet with; I beg the liberty only to use the figure no farther than St. *Austin* does, who cites this very place against those Heretics, that condemned all use of secular Arms as unlawful: So I crave leave from this Symbol of buying Swords to infer thus much, that although spiritual Arms are a Christians proper weapons in times

Contra Marcion. lib. 2. 2.

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times of danger; yet even the natural means of just defence are allowed to Christians, as well as to other men.

Luke 6.29.

A Doctrine which the severest of our blessed Lords Precepts do not in the least overthrow. For although it is certain, that by such Commands as that, *Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other*, we are positively required to bear all tollerable injuries with mildness, and self-denial; yet no Casuist is so severe in expounding that and the like Scriptures, but they universally grant, that when private mens lives are in jeopardy, and much more when the public life of the State is in danger, the free use of all the honest means of Personal, or Political safety was never prohibited by our blessed Saviour.

Now then from this figure of a Sword, I take occasion to propose this great truth to be the subject of my present Discourse. That notwithstanding the most Evangelical Precepts of meekness, patience, forgiving, blessing, and praying for Enemies, still the warlike furniture, and use of just Arms is in all Ages of Christianity lawful, is in some seasons, some exigencies of times, a Duty more incumbent than the very Arts of Peace; that Christians, as well as other men, may furnish themselves with Swords, not to act the least private injury, but to defend themselves, as much as may be, against all; and especially may use
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their Swords, when lawfully called, against public injury; in assisting the Civil State of which they are members; in fighting the Lords Battels; and then they fight the Lords Battels, when they fight for the cause of their temporal Princes.

Of this Doctrine, when I shall have briefly dispatched the general Theory, I will then, God willing, if your attention shall hold out, try to reduce it to the particular practice, and magnanimous design of this great Assembly, by representing to you, that, if ever there was any Time, or Country, or Society of men, to which our pure and peaceable Religion it self has more than ordinarily recommended the pious use of the Sword, or the due preparations for using it, this is the Time, this the Country, this the Society, you having such Laws and Liberties to defend; not against your Prince, to whom, or to his Progenitors you owe them; but against the same parties of your Fellow-Subjects, who once already usurped them; you having such a Church and Faith to contend for, against forein Usurpations, Domestic Separations, and Combinations of Separation, you having such a Faiths-Defender to serve with your Purfes, your Scrips, your Swords, your Lives.

As to the first thing propounded; I shall not spend time in proving this universal

truth, That all defensive, or offensive means of safety, which amongst all men are righteous, are equally so to Christians as to any other part of Mankind. It will be enough in this matter to say, That all the Instruments of a just defence, or offence, are by the Christian Law as much allowed to be used, as by the Natural Law they are taught to be provided.

Cicero pro
Milont.

And that, says the Heathen Orator, is a Law not given to us, but born with us, to which we were not educated, but made; which we took not from reading, or institution, but from the very Principles of our beings: that when ever our Lives are in danger, from the treachery of Robbers, or rage of Enemies, then *Omnis honesta esset ratio expediendæ salutis*, then, says he, all ways of securing our selves are honest, and even honourable, for so the word *honestum* does usually signifie.

I must not go so far as Tully does; I cannot say, with him, that all ways of defending our Lives from danger are honest; much less are they honourable. But this I will say, that all Lawful ways, in such cases, are not only truly honourable, but truly Christian, and I will use no other proof of it than what he alledges, That this is most agreeable to the true Law of Nature.

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For, let none be mistaken, the Doctrine of Christ, in its highest Dispensations of Grace, in its severest Rules of Mortification, did never design to abolish the original Dictates of Right Reason, or of sincere Nature: but rather to correct the irregularities of Reason misguided, and to reform the Depravations of Nature corrupted. Of Right Reason and Nature all the Light and Rules were written by the finger of God on the hearts of men; of the Gospel all the Truths and Precepts were written by the Holy Spirit of God in his revealed Word. The Hand indeed and the Character of the one is much clearer and more legible than the other. But, since the same God was the Author of both, they cannot in the least contradict each other.

For its part, so far is the Gospel from doing so, so far from destroying the common Principles of Humanity, towards our being, or well-being in this world, that it more strongly confirms, and advances them all by the higher Commands of Christianity. So far it is from extinguishing the harmless desire of self-preservation, that of all Institutions in the world it proposes the best means to effect it.

Wherefore that is a thing rather to be taken for granted than proved, That the use of

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the Sword, for public or private defence, is lawful among Christians: A self-evident truth; denied by none but by some wild Sects of Enthusiasts. And indeed it were to be wished that all those who are of that opinion would in practice stick to it, since it may be observed of them, that they are never against the use of the Sword but when they are not Masters of it.

Thus far then your Duty is plain before you. The profession of Arms is not in the least contradictory to the Christian Profession in general. But still there is some difficulty behind, how the forcible drawing of the Sword can be consistent with those severe and mortifying Graces, to which above all other Religions, indeed well-nigh contrary to all other, Christianity alone obliges all its Disciples? How Warlike Enterprizes can stand with Meekness? How an undaunted heart with self-denial? How a daring spirit with Patience? How Conquest with love of Enemies?

What shall we say in this Question? Will it suffice to affirm, That Christ our great Law-giver has divided the parts of his Discipline? Has distributed to several men their several portions of it according to their distinct conditions in this world? That only from such as you, the governing and active part of mankind, He

requires

requires Valour; a high Mind, and a brave Spirit? And that only from such as us, the lower, and the obeying part, he expects Mildness, Gentleness, Patience? That cannot be: For although to several Stations and Relations of men in this world our blessed Lord has assigned their peculiar duties: yet to no particular Rank or Order of men did he ever confine any one of all his general Precepts.

Wherefore there must be some other way for all these Virtues, that seem so extremely distant, to meet and entirely agree in the same Breasts. To this end, you may be assured, that our Lord did never so injoin any one Christian Grace to all Christians, as utterly to exclude any other: He never obliged any of his Followers to be so meek, as to be without all Courage; nor so courageous as to be void of all Meekness. But he has so wisely tempered, and graciously proportioned all his heavenly gifts, that the stoutest courage, which he teaches, is always found to be the meekest; and the meekest heart, which he makes so, is in the likeliest way to be the most courageous.

Here then let us fix. If this be true, then instead of any jealousy, that the strictest Laws of Christ will break a brave mind, or debase a bold heart to Cowardize; you ought.

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ought rather hence to conclude, That only by his Laws, and the Hopes, and Rewards which attend their performance, you can be taught a perfect Valour. And consider, I pray, how undeniable this will appear in the particular Instances.

It is true, our holy Faith most solemnly injoyns Condescension, Long-suffering, Forbearance, Mercy; and requires the more of all these in men to one another, since it shews us there is so infinitely much of them in God towards men. But now will any of these Virtues be a hindrance to the true Fortitude? Rather in the common experience of the best, and most generous part of Mankind, as well as of Christians, is not the truest Fortitude always observed to be the most inoffensive, most accessible, hardest to be provoked, easiest to be intreated?

It is confessed, the Law of Christ requires the most fearless minds, nevertheless to fear God; to fear him so, as to tremble at offending him; so as to obey him, and by such a fear helps us to enjoy him. But now, can there be any surer means, than such a fear, to raise your minds above all unworthy fear of men, or worldly dangers? We know the Gospel commands us to fear men too, for Gods sake: obliges the stoutest minds, as much

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as the gentlest, to pay an equally-dutiful submission to their Lawful Superiours. But does the strictest obedience suppress the true stoutness? Do not you find, that exactness of Discipline increases it? Is it not brutish Ferity rather than manly Boldness, which will not endure the easie yoke of Conscientious Obedience?

It is granted, our Religion forbids all men to invade each others Rights. That, says the fierce, or the ambitious man, would put a stop to many a gallant and valorous action. It would indeed to many a licentious, and outrageous: But not to any worthy Enterprize. For, as in Peace nothing can be truly just, so in War nothing can be truly brave, where the sacred distinction between Right and Wrong is not kept inviolable.

My Brethren, That slowness, and backwardness of attempting upon others unjustly, that fear of injuring others; for such a Fear, it is not your shame, but your praise to own: that willingness to right others as well as your selves, which Christianity teaches all its Disciples, will certainly make a Souldier innocent in all his Quarrels, and the consciousness of that innocence cannot but render his mind more calm, serene, and even invincible in all their Events. *Whence come Wars, and Fightings.*

James 4. 1.

Fightings among you, says the Apostle, *Come they not from your Lusts*? It is true, Rapine, and unjust Wars come from thence: and that Religion, which most subdues your Lusts, will most remove the occasions of such Wars. But at the same time, and by the very same way, it will more secure the Success, more increase the Reputation, and more brighten the Lustre of all your just Arms.

Wherefore so far is Christianity it self, so far those Doctrines, it most tenderly cherishes as its own genuine product; the Doctrines, I mean, of Humility, Patience, Kindness to the Afflicted, and Pardon of Offenders; so far is any of these from being opposite to the Principles of true Honour, and Valour, your Art professes: that whoever would conceive in his mind the perfect Character of an excellent Warrior; so he ought to form his Image; to furnish him with all kinds, but especially to adorn him with this kind of ease, mild, and gentle Virtues.

Eph. 6. 11.

And if the very Heathens thought their Poetic Heroes could not be compleat, except they first received their Arms from their Gods: How much more ought a Christian Hero to fetch his from Heaven? How devoutly ought he to *put on the whole Armour of God*, as St. Paul calls all the Graces of a Christian life; how careful should he be, not only to abstain from the common sins, which

which Religion condemns ; but to aspire to the highest Duties, it commands ! not only not to be given to Luxury, and Debauchery, not only not to owe his valor to his vices ; but amidst so many more temptations, to keep his Eyes, and Thoughts from being defiled, as well as his hands from being rapacious : Not only not to blaspheme Heaven, and defy his Maker, with horrid Oaths, and Curses ; but more humbly to Reverence, more dutifully to depend on that God, to whom he more peculiarly appeals : to keep your natural Lives more than ordinarily innocent, which are exposed to so many more than natural Deaths : to have your Minds free from all sordid Passions, or Desires, far above the mean appetites of Avarice, or Cruelty : to have true Glory only for your End : to use no inglorious means in acquiring it : to have your Courages strengthen'd with Truth, Faith, Righteousness ; sweeten'd, and graced with Brotherly Love, Pity, Compassion : not to be Enemies to your very Enemies ; but only to their Oppressions, and Injustice ; to be Friends, Lovers, Imitators of their virtues : not only to be unconcern'd in Dangers, but patient in bad, mild in good Success ; merciful in Victory.

These, my Brethren, Religion tells us are the chief Excellencies of a Christian. These, you know, are the principal Accomplishments of a Soldier. Of these your Profession acknowledges

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the Necessity, and labors for , what the School of Christ only teaches, the Perfection.

The use, and honor of just Arms appearing thus consistent with the sincerity, with the very meekness of Christianity : Be pleas'd, that we now go on to contemplate, in what special Opportunities, what conjunctures of times, they may be most justly, and with truest praise employ'd.

First without question, always justly the Sword may be drawn by private Men , to defend their Lives against private Assaults ; but not alwayes, nor at any time, for their private revenge. Your personal Preservation from Injury, God has , in some sort, committed to your selves, and to your own Swords, as well as to the Magistrates care ; but in no sort , distinct from the Magistrate , has God intrusted to your selves, the avenging of any personal Injuries.

What a bold invasion then on Authority ! what a rude violation of Public Justice, is the too common ill custom, of Mens striving to right themselves by private Duels ! what is it indeed , but another kind of Rebellion against the Government ! that every man's hand should be ready to be lift up, against every man, on every imaginary affront ! that the Shadows and Punctilio's of Honor should be so much, more regarded, than the solid Substance of it ! that those weapons, which nothing ought to command, but the Sacred Cause
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of your God, and your King, men should oftner draw, for every trifle, on every rash word, against their Countreymen, their Neighbors, their best Friends sometimes; against their King in his Subjects, against their God in his Laws.

A mistaken way of mens gaining to themselves a contemptible Reputation; when either Passion, or Intemperance makes them not themselves. A way of Honor, which the most victorious Nations, of the Ancient World, seldom, or never practis'd; and which that very Nation of the Modern World, that either first introduc'd, or most cherish'd it, is grown quite asham'd of. I beseech you, let not the *English* think that to be the greatest bravery, which was never esteem'd brave by the old *Romans*; whose National greatness of Mind, in other things, you so much resemble. Let not the *English* any longer allow that to be praise-worthy, which your next Neighbors on the Continent, your old Competitors in Arms, have quite forsaken, as dishonorable: and since they have done so, have remarkably flourish'd in the Field.

You cannot but know, that it has not bin by particular Quarrels, or single Combats against the Will of the Prince, that the Profession of the Sword has bin made so famous: I must say, had there bin no other use of it, it had soon bin most infamous: A Skill fitter for divided Barbarians, than for Nations civilized. The virtue, the loveliness

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of your Art consists in the joint force of it : that it can make whole Troops , and Armies to have at once the strength of a great Multitude, and the firm Union, and well combined motion, as it were, of one Man.

There never was, nor ever will be any Country, or Government, that got a lasting Fame, or Empire, by the unruly Passions, and unlawful Attempts of private Men. Most surely many States have bin destroy'd by them, whilest those Kingdoms have bin always most prosperous, and renown'd, where an orderly, well-disciplin'd Valor has bin most encourag'd, and single Outrages most severely punish'd : where no force has bin thought honorable, but what is justify'd by Authority : and that force is honorable in the judgment of the Gospel it self.

Wherefore Secondly, as by private Men, for private Safety, though not for private Revenge, the Sword may be justly drawn ; so much more by all in a Public Cause. And then not only for Safety, but also for Revenge : for Revenge too ; since vengeance belongs only to God ; and to none besides himself, but to the Publick Sword, has God reserved the repaying of vengeance.

For just defence then, I say, and for just offence too, the Sword ought to be used in a Publick Cause. But let us remember, nothing can make it to be a Public Cause, but a lawful Authority. It can never be made so by every, or by any private Spirit.

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It is most true Divinity, as well as Politics, that none the most vehement persuasions, or dissuasions of Conscience, none the greatest pretences to new Light, or Divine Inspirations can justify any Member of a Christian State, or Church, nor any whole Church, to violate the establish'd Laws of their Country by resisting. Nay, there can be no surer proof of an erroneous Conscience, of a Spirit, that is not of God, than this, if it shall provoke Men possess'd with it, under any colour of the Cause of God, to Arm against, and by open force to oppose the Powers, that undoubtedly are of God.

'Tis true of old under the Jewish dispensation, God himself thought fit sometimes, by an immediate call, different from that of the Civil Government, to excite private Men to draw the Sword, and to perform acts of Supreme Justice. Yet then he made them cease to be private Men any longer; first placed them in his own stead; shew'd certain signs of his presence with them; and often gave them the power of Miracles, to confirm what they did. So that no man now ought to imitate such extraordinary Examples, without being able to produce the like extraordinary Commission. And that is not now God's method any longer. His reveal'd Law being now completely discover'd, God himself has seldom, or never now recourse to such instances of his absolute Prerogative. And therefore certainly no man ought to usurp them at his

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his pleasure. To the Law, and to the Testimony, to his written Word, he now refers us; and, as that commands, to *Kings, and all that are in Authority*; to whom alone he has committed the executive part of his common Power, as to the Vicegerents upon Earth of his Justice and Mercy.

Thirdly therefore, on a public Call only, and only in a public Cause, can just public Arms be taken up; and so they may be even by Christians: for the Cause of God, and the King: which, though in words they seem divided, yet in reality they are one, and the same, and inseparable: as the same Sword, of old, was call'd the Sword of the Lord, and of *Gideon*, the Supreme Magistrate. This, my Brethren, is not only the best, but the only true Cause of God in this World, for which all Subjects are bound in Conscience to fight; the Cause of their lawful Sovereign, that which he Authorizes, either by his Person, or his Commission, or his Allowance.

This, I say, is the only true Cause even of God, which can justly call for your Swords. Besides this, we know, God has another Cause in the World; that of his own Church, and the true Religion: which whenever it is united with the Sovereign Authority; as, Blessed be God, it is in our Nation, then that is of all others unquestionably, a Cause the most sacred, the nearest, and dearest to God himself. But wherever the Cause of the true Religion,

ligion, and that of the Supreme Power, are at variance, then God himself is pleas'd to take his own Religion into his peculiar care; to maintain, and advance it in a way, that of all others is the most Divine, a way that is more esteem'd of God himself, let me say it, than even your way of triumphant Arms, and Conquest. For such is the way of gentle teaching, and innocent living, and patient suffering, and meek obedience.

By this Method only God chose to begin the Gospel, and first rais'd the Christian Church whilst the Empire was Heathen, and the World idolatrous, and by no other Methods, but such as conform to this, most surely not by forcible resistance, or open violence, does God still allow the Gospel to be carried on by Subjects; wherever the Sovereign Power is addicted to Superstition, or Idolatry.

But what, say they, must we not arm against the lawful Prince for the Cause of God, and his Truth? How then shall we exercise our Zeal for the true Religion? What then will become of the true Religion it self?

No, not for the Cause of God. For then at best, you will oppose one Cause of God against another: and, as you order it, the false Cause of God against the true: and thus for the seeming interest of Christianity, you infringe the fundamental Precepts of it.

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Not you, My Brethren. I speak this for the sake of some without Doors; if they would but hear us. But alas! they make it a part of their Religion not to hear us. However I must say, that Zeal may be irregular, and wicked, though in the Cause of the true Religion. Zeal is not only to be justify'd by the cause, which raises it; but as much by the authority on which it acts. As for the right, and well-order'd Zeal, whenever it has not the count'nance, or concurrence of the Magistrate; it ought only to be employ'd in peaceable Actions: in their Wishes, and Studies, and Prayers; in their Counsels, and Advises, when call'd to it; but chiefly in amending their own lives, and turning the edge of their Zeal on their own Sins; by that innocent, but effectual way too, to do their parts to preserve, and spread the true Faith.

Wherefore let them no longer intitle the true Religion to their own Discontents, or Ambitions. What Religion can there be, in Mens pursuing violent paths, on a pretence of the Glory of God, but contrary to his express commands? Let them practise its duties; and God will assert its interest. Religion desires none to be its Champions, except they first become its Disciples; and such are not
 Rom. 3. 8. they who will do evil, that good may come.

Can such men think to give us better examples for the propagating Religion, than the first great Masters, and Founders of Christianity did? or can they

before the Artillery Company.

they hope for better Success in it, than they had : and what way did they judge best ? what by Experience did they find best to promote it ? Prodigious indeed was the Gospels first increase : But far more admirable the means of it : which were chiefly their Enemies Persecutions, their own Submission, and the power of Miracles. By the wonders they wrought, they exercised a violence over Nature ; but none over Laws, or civil Governments, to change, or to subvert them. By a lowly yielding to the Heathen Empire, they first soften'd its fury, then converted it : they piously render'd to their *Cæsars the things, that were Cæsars* : they cheerfully pay'd them Tribute ; readily took up Arms at their Summons ; most willingly perform'd all their Laws, except such as that of adorning them. Though they could not be induced by fear, or favour to rank their Princes equal with their God, yet they preserved them in the next place : though they would never worship them as Gods upon Earth, yet they religiously obey'd them as God's Deputies and Representatives : they judg'd those, who rebell'd against them, worthy of Death, as if they had actually rebell'd against God himself. What else means St. Paul ? when, in so many words, he declares, *Rom. 13.2.* That *whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God : and they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation.* Out of all doubt, he there speaks

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of the Temporal Power, and of Eternal Damnation to ensue upon resisting it : than which what more grievous Punishment could have bin inflicted, had they immediately resisted God himself ?

And recollect, I intreat you, the time, when this was so positively pronounc'd by *St. Paul*. It must have bin written, under the reign of *Claudius*, or *Nero*. So that it is evident, all that resisted them, were, without repentance, in a damnable state. Can there be then any colour so specious, any cause so just, in which, instead of Damnation, a Christian subject may justly expect to receive to himself Salvation, on the account of resisting ?

Was it then forbidden, on the penalty of everlasting Death, to rebel against those Emperors, most cruel Tyrants, most fierce Enemies to the Christian Name, Monsters of Men, either of no Religion, or a false one, and yet a disgrace to Heathenism it self ? if however on the most solemn obligation of Conscience, they were not to be oppos'd, much less destroy'd by any Christians ; what can be said greater, or more august than this ? what stronger, what more sacred Confirmation can be given to our conscientious obedience to another manner of Authority ? By how many more eyes, Temporal, and Eternal, are we bound to yield a faithful subjection to a Christian King ? Under whose gentle Protection, his Subjects prosper ; though some almost against their wills :

a King, whose Power is only shewn by moderate Laws, which to his mildness owe their Moderation : in a word, a King, who is the best nursing Father of the best Church in the Christian World.

Against this Doctrine, I know the Enemies of our Peace will be ready with their old, and obsolete Objection, That this is Court Flattery, and a Divinity only fit for Camps, and standing Armies. I must tell them, it had bin well for our Country, if we had never heard of worse Camp-Divinity than this, we had then never felt the real tyranny of a standing Army. And if they would consult Scripture for other uses, than to pervert it, they would soon be convinc'd, that this is good Evangelical Divinity. Nay, this Assembly gives me confidence to inform them, what they will be more loath to hear, that now, God be prais'd, this is not only good Camp, but good City-Divinity too.

But, when we teach the great Doctrine of Obedience, if we must be said to flatter, our comfort is, we flatter in no worse company, than that of the Apostles, *St. Peter*, and *St. Paul*, and wellnigh of all the divinely-inspired Penmen of the Bible. However when they accuse the Church of *England* of this kind of Flattery, that is, of unshaken fealty to the Crown, let them consider, which of the two is the more excusable Flattery : to humour the uncertain populace, and the unstable vulgar, which to serve is the lowest Slavery ; or to Preach

a due Submission to the Lawful establish'd Government; which to obey is the safest Liberty?

You see, My Dear Brethren, the course of my Argument has brought us to such a Cause, as is worthy of your Swords, if need shall require. Though the Ardour of your Loyal Valour must give me leave to say, I hope, and I verily believe, there will be no such need. I am persuaded, and, I think, I may presage, that this present alacrity, and vigor, to which you, and His Majestie's other Loyal Subjects have bin of late awaken'd, this cheerful posture, and prepared readiness of your Swords to be drawn, will be an abundant Safety to our King, and Country without once drawing them. Such will be the Innocence, as well as Justice of your Arms, such the desperate condition of your Adversaries; that whenever they draw their Swords against their Prince, they must throw away the Scabbard: whilst yours, by God's Providence, being manag'd with an ordinary watchfulness, and sobriety, will be sufficient to defend him, without ever unsheathing them.

But if, which God in his Infinite Mercy avert, if ever the same tumultuous spirit, on the same groundless insinuations, shall once more infatuate the corrupt part of the Nation; to their own Destruction, to their own certainly it will be at last; if they do not again meet with the like mercy: But if God, in his unsearchable Judgments, shall suffer

suffer our Country, in the same Age, to be scourg'd again the same calamitous way: then what can be a more Noble, or more Pious Cause, wherein to employ your Arms, than this of the King, and his Family?

A Cause, in which you will scarce meet with an Enemy, but he, or his Relations have bin already forgiven. And so they will carry about with them the black guilt, not only of Rebellion, but of an ungrateful Rebellion, after Pardon receiv'd; a Sin, which the Devil is not capable of committing; whil'st you will have a Cause, in which all your several Interests, that are elsewhere scatter'd, of personal Preservation, of political Duty, of conscientious Obedience, are united. In this one Cause, all your Countries Blessings, all your Churches Rights, all your own Securities are involved: in defending his Life, his Throne, who *is the breath of our Nostrils, the anointed of the Lord*: who has not only this common to him with other Kings, that he is the Image of the Divine Power; but has this peculiar to himself, or communicated to him with a very few, that he is the Image of the Divine Mercy: of whose Abhorrence of all Illegal Oppressions, or Arbitrary Proceedings, if the grace of all his former Oblivions, and Indemnities has not yet convinc'd a stubborn Generation of Men, after they have so long enjoy'd the benefits of them, what need they any other new Argument, than

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than this here before me ? that when he has such a Nobility, and Gentry, such a Militia of the whole Kingdom, especially yours, entirely at his Service ; yet he is pleas'd to use your Arms no otherwise than now, in the peaceful Exercises of War.

For such a King, whilst his Goodness, and Benignity gives you no occasions to fight for him, what can all his Subjects do less, than to love, and revere him in Peace ? to yield him an active Obedience the more cheerfully, since he has taken care, we shall have no opportunities of giving him a passive Obedience ? not only not to hinder but to perform his just Commands ? to think our selves only capable of being a great People, by making him greater ? *Every Soul to be Subject to him ?* So, if we believe St. Paul, there is a necessity we should be.

Rom. 13.1.

Rom. 13.4.

The Phrase in the Original is *Ἀνδρῶν ἐκκλησίαν* ; which signifies the necessity not only of a cold, and forc'd, and meerly just Subjection ; but of a regular, well-disposed Submission ; not only to live quietly, but in a quiet order ; nay more, to live, as it were in Military Order under him. For the word belongs to your Profession. The Rules of the warlike Art are properly call'd Tactics, and such should be our Obedience to our Sovereign : so exact, as that which you practise in Armies : so, as strictly to observe his Orders ; so, as to be careful not to transgress his Laws, for love of him, more than for fear of Punishment ; so, as
to

to be silent from Murmurings, loud only in Applauses, and Thanks to Almighty God for the felicities of his Reign.

Happy all his Subjects ! if all were but sensible of their Happiness, and would do their parts to perpetuate it. Happy ! if all would remember what he has forgot : and remember it, not to upbraid others, but to beware, and grow wiser themselves for the future. Happy ! if all were such as you. So willing to obey the King in quiet times; so skilful to serve him in the Administrations of his Justice ; so ready, and able to guard him against all Confusions.

Such an Academy of Arts, as well as Arms ; such a Company of Citizens ; such a Nursery of Commanders cannot, under God, but afford him a sure defence in his Wars ; as you do already supply him with the Riches , and Ornaments of Peace.

Happy is the People, that is in such a case ! Happy is the People, whose God is the Lord ! The Lord of Hosts ; who giveth Salvation to Kings ; who delivereth his Servant David from the hurtful Sword , and arms him with the Sword of Justice ; which he manages by ^{Ps. 144.} *a law of Kindness : and which I beseech Almighty God, may flourish in his hand, for many, many years ; in his House, for all Generations to come. Amen.*